Modernising the Labour Force Survey from April 2026

Media Statement

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Source: Labour Force, Australia, February 2026

The ABS is modernising how it collects data in the Labour Force Survey, helping us continue to produce high quality labour market statistics, support strong participation, and make it simpler and more convenient for participants.

Sean Crick, ABS head of labour statistics, said: 'The transition to our new system starts in April and when complete, it will give survey participants a modern, easy and secure way to complete the Labour Force Survey. The digital experience will be significantly improved. Participants will be able to complete the survey on a mobile device of their choice, including smartphones.

'We have also simplified the survey by grouping related topics and removing duplicated questions. Together, these changes will make participation faster and simpler while ensuring we continue to collect high quality information to produce Australia's trusted labour force statistics.'

These changes are part of the ABS Data Acquisition Modernisation Program (/about/key-priorities/data-acquisition-modernisation-program/about-data-acquisition-modernisation-program) , funded through the 2024-25 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook. They draw on the ABS's experience modernising its statistical programs to continue to inform Australia's important decisions with relevant, trusted and objective data, statistics and insights.

Commencing from April 2026, these changes will be implemented progressively over a 5-month period.

To ensure the continued statistical quality of the Labour Force Survey during the transition, the ABS will be employing robust quality and risk management processes. These are based on lessons from previous modernisation efforts as well as a comprehensive testing program, that included a field test of 2,000 households conducted in late 2025.

'We are managing this transition with care to ensure our data remains accurate, trustworthy and secure,' Mr Crick said.

To enable a smooth transition to the new systems and processes, there will be some changes to the Labour Force Survey between the April and August reference months:

- The headline Labour Force, Australia (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release) publication, usually published on the third Thursday following the reference month, will be published a week later.
- The release of some supplementary labour data and microdata products, including data on Industry, Occupation, Retrenchment, Reasons worked less than usual hours, Reasons not in the labour force and Duration of job search, and the Longitudinal LFS and TableBuilder products, will be temporarily suspended. The production and release of this information will recommence from the September 2026 reference period and where possible this will include data collected over the transition period.

Headline estimates of employment, hours worked, and the unemployment, participation and underutilisation rates,

will continue to be produced monthly.

Labour Force Survey Background

The Labour Force Survey (/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release) is the official source of employment statistics in Australia, providing trusted estimates of employment, unemployment, participation and hours worked.

'The ABS has been conducting the Labour Force Survey since 1960. The survey has evolved since then to ensure that it continues to provide an accurate view of the contemporary labour market. These changes are the next step in this evolution,' Mr Crick said.

Further information, and regular updates on the modernisation of the Labour Force Survey, are available on the ABS website (/about/key-priorities/data-acquisition-modernisation-program/modernising-labour-force-survey) .

Media Notes

- Find more information about the changes to the Labour Force Survey and its release schedule here: Modernising the Labour Force Survey (/about/key-priorities/data-acquisition-modernisation-program/modernising-labour-force-survey) .
- For any media requests, email media@abs.gov.au (mailto:media@abs.gov.au) or call 1300 175 070 (9am - 5pm Canberra time) with your questions and deadline.
- Please attribute the 'Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)' when using our data.
- Official, high-resolution images of ABS media spokespeople can be found in our image library.
- Explore our Data Crash Course (https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Femail.streem.com.au%2Fc%2FeJxMUU1zmzAQ_TVwg9HH6oMDBxKXDEldN20dO7lkJCTFsrFxEdhDf30Hkszksiu99_ZJ89bkoDJnYptjwYUALgSJdzkAk1oLrphwVhquCccIjJGCE6wcjn3OM2ZUXTOLKYJXLF0NUlIsEZU8AhS8sQf_Nzkq39guJJryZwAmSW877JdOhFxk-_6_hwiWkSkjEiphoBwGpSzjT8dQnru2t7WvW9PaTv0Tdse0ro9TlpaDl0T0cX7PGGTA5s8GCnHduiHVNv50ljyQH_-sPs1TLIy-KktxufnV_W4TUSzGZ-u0keEG9WriC4QiwgTt4jMbWmNVxFhgJQO6Vt7SdUwEwQLnhmMtZQEOGDjiEbSWKi1ZgbMLKJQGy2oqMEpqAnOFAUpVU2MINhJ-f7Sl8pphihhHIRAFDDFMMPr0-HUXk_z-c-mPOu7l6CpkXa8L_X2Btk13tV3B786_RrNZh2q5tmvfHX9vi-G5aK4Lm-rUDWFX_n7rdrAv6WvQnUoV9W-9bPfzJt1tW9H9zgH9Fk-f_a18PCR1Y3i5Lrh6PfqQu_WlTp-w-fjw0uBa7Uij-X-qfDjeV7D27Z3yw9P3tlgu4s1U9rxcUo46WxjVbCJN_kMvH4AES2oAGBx945HXxcRh76z9jgNacyd5I4lLnMqASAyyQSwBCsuhbMqo4LEl5z8DwAA__8S394w&data=05%7C02%7CArun.Shankar%40abs.gov.au%7Cd021f04fe887476a61fc08de4e5f40ca%7C34cdb737c4fa4c219a3488ac2d721f88%7C0%7C0%7C639034368180287454%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=RJFaDeFsgwK9zVDWd4PdcM8GY%2F8Ti46cI0BWf8pxGhU%3D&reserved=0) for guidance on finding and interpreting ABS data, and subscribe to our release notifications (https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Femail.streem.com.au%2Fc%2FeJxMjj-P4yAQRz8NdFg2YBgKF7FyLnMnpbgyGsOQcOc_WUOSr7_y7kq77Zv3Rr_QaXQxcOoaa6zVxlrJb10NUqvgZDQqgm2sNoG8BeWjAgPW8tQZ1wb0vqVG1frSQPQaQDVQKzBM1zkF-p_exIxpoi0LMCO00WpwwpTN3ar9wKfuVso9M3VgcmByeL1eusIxV9f1WeGDyQEfORcsmclhWUuKyWNJ65Kr03kP_tLIZP8Hr7Qbh_7MZP9rf81kf_rhM9mfaXsmT0wNv--0HFf_mGkpTJp_makjLThOFPhMIaHYaCLMJFLoPsDlCzB1UFbrlm-fnOn6ey3PZSOa92hsTAQTWxFdRKG1BOGsbkWDBmwkdMpK_uzkewAAAP__j8J2dw&data=05%7C02%7CArun.Shankar%40abs.gov.au%7Cd021f04fe887476a61fc08de4e5f40ca%7C34cdb737c4fa4c219a3488ac2d721f88%7C0%7C0%7C639034368180316223%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TSyNd9dtVonem7gkZ27Nnnrsjcuuyf%2Bwg6tUI%2FEAo8I%3D&reserved=0) to stay updated.